Talks with American establishment on terror

*93. MS. MABEL REBELLO:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he visited United States of America (USA) to initiate interaction;

(b) if so, whether issue of perpetrators of Mumbai terror attack and Pakistan's continued support to the terror infrastructure figured in that high level ministerial talks with American establishment;

(c) if so, what were the other main points discussed with U.S. Government; and

(d) to what extent U.S.A. has assured India of its help and assistance in checking terrorist activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI AJAY MAKEN): (a) to (d) The Union Home Minister led a delegation to the United States of America in September, 2009. During the visit, the Union Home Minister had discussions with senior dignitaries of the US administration on issues relating to co-operation to combat terrorism and, *inter alia*, on areas of human resource development, agency to agency level co-operation, maritime security etc. The US government has expressed its support for the efforts of India to counter terrorism and assured greater co-operation.

Unmotorable condition of Shriadi Ghat portion of NH-48

*94. SHRI M. RAMA JOIS: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent for the upkeep of 37 Kms. of National Highway (NH-48) between Sakleshpur and Gundya which is called 'Shriadi Ghat' during the last five years;

(b) why even after spending so much of amount the road is not in a motorable condition;

(c) whether it is a fact that granular sub-base, which is the fundamental requirement of the Highway, is missing in this part of the road; and

(d) the action taken by Government to ensure that this part of National Highway is constructed according to the requirement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH): (a) An amount of Rs.39,35,90,954/- has been spent in the up keep of 37 kms. stretch of 'Shriadi Ghat' on National Highway (NH-48) during the last five years.

(b) The road gets damaged due to inherent deficiency in the original construction, very heavy rainfall in the area and extremely high traffic intensity of 30,000 PCUs/day with a sizeable proportion of overloaded trucks carrying iron ore and forest produce.

(c) The road had been declared as NH is the year 1972. When the existing road was taken over from Public Works Department, adequate granular sub-base was not existing. After declaring as National Highway, only occasional overlays were laid in the from of improvement to riding quality/strengthening.

(d) Government proposes to carry out major rehabilitation by sanctioning during 2009-10 concrete pavement in the entire stretch at a cost of Rs.118.58 crore.

FTA negotiations with EU

*95. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE:
SHRI N. K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the European Commission has called for an open discussion between India and the European Union on several issues for the successful conclusion of the ongoing India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations;

(b) if so, the details of discussions held between India and EU in the recent past and outcome thereof;

(c) whether the trade negotiations between India and EU are designed to eliminate barriers and not to create new ones; and

(d) if so, the further reaction of Government on Indo-EU deals?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) to (d) The Government of India is negotiating a bilateral Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement with the European Union (EU).

An India-EU High Level Trade Group (HLTG) between India and EU was established at the 6th India-EU Summit held in New Delhi in September, 2005 to explore ways and means to widen and broaden the economic relationship and explore the possibility of a Trade and Investment Agreement. The HLTG submitted its report to the 7th India-EU Summit held in Helsinki in October, 2006. The Summit decided that the two sides should enter into negotiations for a Broad based Trade and Investment Agreement covering areas of Trade in Goods, Trade in Services, Investment, Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures, Technical Barriers to Trade, Trade Remedies, Customs Cooperation and Trade Facilitation, Dispute Settlement, Competition and Intellectual Property Rights. Negotiations commenced in June 2007 covering all these areas. So far, seven rounds of negotiations have been held. The Seventh Round of Negotiations was held in July, 2009 and the next round of Negotiations is scheduled to be held in January, 2010. Legal texts of the proposed agreement in all these areas have been exchanged and are being discussed. Tariff liberalisation offers have also been exchanged on trade in goods. Negotiations are ongoing to eliminating barriers to trade and not to create new ones. Both sides are committed for an early, balanced and successful conclusion of the negotiations.